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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of Chapter 1 Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature (DLACL) program in Houston, Texas, in the academic achievement of students served during the 1988-89 school year. A total of 8,505 students in grades 1-5 were served by the program. The investigation was designed to provide answers to the following research questions: (1) was there a difference between the Chapter 1 students and the non-Chapter 1 comparison group in reading/language arts at grade levels 2 through 5; (2) what was the performance of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students on the initial administration of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) at grade levels 1 through 5 and (3) what was the performance of the first grade non-LEP students on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6)? Results of the first research question indicated: the program objective was met at three of the four grade levels on the MAT-6 reading test, with the Chapter 1 students performing as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 3, and 5, and the program objective was met at three of the four grade levels on the MAT-6 language test, with the Chapter 1 students performing as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 4, and 5. Question 2 results indicated that the Chapter 1 LEP students enrolled in the DLACL program scored above grade level on the SABE reading test at grade 1 and 2 and below grade level at grade 3, 4, and 5. Question 3 results indicated that the Chapter 1 non-LEP first grade students enrolled in the DLACL program scored below grade level on the MAT-6 reading and language subtests. (Four tables of data are included.) (MG)

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Chapter I:
Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature

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Executive Summary

Chapter 1 Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature (DLACL) Program

Final Report 1988-89
Chapter 1 Research

Program Description

This program provided supplemental instruction in reading/language arts and English as a Second Language for eligible students with an emphasis on the use of literature to teach reading comprehension. Most students in the program were served in reading centers staffed by Chapter 1 teachers, some of whom were assisted by teacher aides. A reading center staffed by a team consisting of a teacher and an aide served groups of up to 15 students. Centers staffed by single teachers served groups of up to 8 students. Itinerant teachers served groups of no more than 8 students.

The program objectives read as follows:

Objective 1: Non-LEP pupils who have participated in the DLACL program for at least 100 days, using the approved program materials, will show an average NCE gain that is equal to or greater than the average NCE gain made by non-LEP students at the same educational level in non-Chapter 1 schools.

Objective 2: By the spring testing date, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, who have participated in the DLACL program for at least 100 days, will show an average gain on the California Test of Basic Skills-Español (CTBS-Español) that is equal to or better than the average gain made by LEP students in non-Chapter 1 schools.

Objective 3: Performance of first grade Chapter 1 pupils on the spring MAT-6 will be noted.

Funding Sources

The DLACL program cost $3,335,138, which was 23.4% of total Chapter 1 expenditures ($14,276,293) for instructional programs. A total of 8,505 students were served at a cost of $392 per student.

Evaluation Objectives

This investigation was designed to provide answers for the following research questions:

Research Question 1: Was there a difference between the Chapter 1 students and the non-Chapter 1 comparison group in reading/language arts at grade levels 2 through 5?

Research Question 2: What was the performance of the LEP students on the initial administration of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) at grade levels 1 through 5?

Research Question 3: What was the performance of the first grade non-LEP students on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6)?

Executive Summary (continued)

Methods

Evaluation of the first research question was based upon the Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gain scores achieved by the Chapter 1 students in the evaluation sample. Gain scores for a comparison group will also be presented. Comparisons were made between the Chapter 1 evaluation sample and the comparison group by means of t-tests (two-tailed, significance level = .05). The other research questions were evaluated by presenting the required descriptive statistics.

Results

Research Question 1: The Chapter 1 students performed as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 3, and 5 on the MAT-6 reading test. In addition, the Chapter 1 students performed as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 4, and 5 on the MAT-6 language test.

Research Question 2: The Chapter 1 LEP students enrolled in the DLACL program scored above grade level on the SABE reading test at grades 1 and 2.

Research Question 3: The Chapter 1 non-LEP first grade students enrolled in the DLACL program scored below grade level on the MAT-6 reading and language subtests.

In Conclusion:

Objective 1 was met on the MAT-6 reading test at grades 2, 3, and 5, and on the MAT-6 language test at grade 2, 4, and 5.

Objective 2 was not evaluated because the Spanish test was changed to the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE). There were no pretest scores available for this reason.

Objective 3 was met as the performance of first grade Chapter 1 pupils on the spring MAT-6 is provided.

DESIGN OF THE INQUIRY

The purpose of this inquiry was to examine the impact of the Chapter 1 Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature (DLACL) program on the academic achievement of students served during the 1988-89 school year.

The specific tasks for this inquiry were:

- To evaluate the reading/language arts objective for the program by comparing the academic achievement observed for students (grades 2 through 5) in the program with the achievement observed for a non-Chapter 1 comparison group in reading/language arts.

- To obtain baseline year data for the first grade students in the program along with baseline data for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in grades 1 through 5 on a new Spanish language achievement test.

This investigation was designed to provide answers to the following research questions:

Research Question 1: Was there a difference between the Chapter 1 students and the non-Chapter 1 comparison group in reading/language arts at grade levels 2 through 5?

Research Question 2: What was the performance of the LEP students on the initial administration of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) at grade levels 1 through 5?

Research Question 3: What was the performance of the first grade non-LEP students on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6)?

MOTIVATION FOR CONDUCTING THIS STUDY

Why was this study conducted?

This investigation was conducted for the following reasons:

Federal Requirements: This report presents information collected during the 1988-89 school year as mandated by Federal guidelines. The Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981 (ECIA) established the Chapter 1 program to provide supplemental remedial instruction in reading/language arts, mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education for pupils who are economically and educationally disadvantaged.

HISD Guidelines: The program guidelines from the Bureau of External Funding contained achievement objectives for Chapter 1 instructional programs. The guidelines called for the evaluation of Chapter 1 instructional programs based upon these achievement objectives. This report provides information regarding the attainment of the achievement objectives for the DLACL program.

This report evaluates the following achievement objectives for the Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature program:

The first objective reads as follows: Non-LEP pupils who have participated in the DLACL program for at least 100 days, using the approved program materials, will show an average NCE gain that is equal to or greater than the average NCE gain made by non-LEP students at the same educational level in non-Chapter 1 schools.

The second objective reads as follows: By the spring testing date, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, who have participated in the DLACL program for at least 100 days, will show an average gain on the California Test of Basic Skills-Español (CTBS-Español) that is equal to or better than the average gain made by LEP students in non-Chapter 1 schools.

The third objective reads as follows: Performance of first grade Chapter 1 pupils on the spring MAT-6 will be noted.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

What was the Chapter 1 Developing Language Arts Competencies through Literature (DLACL) program?

The following describes the DLACL program as it was implemented during the 1988-89 school year:

Purpose: The program provided supplemental instruction in reading/language arts and English as a Second Language for eligible students. Students served were those demonstrating the greatest need as determined by reading and language test scores. This program emphasized the use of literature to teach reading comprehension. Each set of books used for small group instruction was accompanied by 6 to 10 related books by different authors designed to encourage students to read independently and to respond to literature, both orally and in writing. The Whole Language approach, which makes use of a wide variety of supplementary literary materials, was used to address district reading comprehension objectives. ESL techniques were used to serve LEP students enrolled in the program.

Number Served & Cost: The DLACL program cost $3,335,138, which was 23.4% of total Chapter 1 expenditures ($14,276,293) for instructional programs. A total of 8,505 students were served at a cost of $392 per student.

Services: Most students in the program were served in reading centers staffed by Chapter 1 teachers, some of whom were assisted by teacher aides. A reading center staffed by a team consisting of a teacher and an aide served groups of up to 15 students. Centers staffed by single teachers served groups of up to 8 students. Itinerant teachers served groups of no more than 8 students.

Schools: The DLACL program was implemented at 77 schools during the 1988-89 school year.

METHODS

How was this study conducted?

The students involved in this study were:

Chapter 1 Student Population: The Chapter 1 Program was implemented on the 111 campuses with the highest percentages of students in the Free Lunch program. In order for a student at one of these schools to be eligible for a Chapter 1 remedial program, the student had to meet placement criteria on an acceptable standardized test. LEP students also had to be recommended by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) at their school. Students who had been retained at the end of the preceding year were eligible for Chapter 1 remediation upon the recommendation of the Promotion/Retention Committee at their school.

The following norm-referenced tests were used to place students into Chapter 1 programs.

- The Language Assessment Scales (LAS) - oral English test for Spanish speaking first grade students
- The Metropolitan Readiness Test - first grade students
- The Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6) - non-LEP students in grades 2 - 5
- The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills - Español (CTBS-Español) - LEP students in grades 2 - 5
- The California Achievement Test (CAT) - students with no other test scores

LEP students who were instructed primarily or entirely in English took the MAT-6 .

Chapter 1 Evaluation Sample: The Chapter 1 students included in this evaluation sample were enrolled in the program for at least 100 days. Only students with MAT-6 scores for spring 88 and spring 89 were included in the evaluation. Students who were retained the previous year were not included because they took the same level test for both the pretest and the posttest. Students who were served in two Chapter 1 reading programs were also not included.

LEP Students: The second objective was not evaluated because the Spanish test was changed to the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE). There were no pretest scores available for this reason.

Comparison Group: The comparison group consisted of non-LEP students from non-Chapter 1 schools at the same educational level as their Chapter 1 counterparts. These students would have been eligible to be enrolled in Chapter 1 remedial programs had they attended Chapter 1 schools.

METHODS (continued)

The results of this evaluation will be reported in the following section and will be based upon gain scores.

Evaluation: The results section will present, by grade level, the gain scores achieved by the Chapter 1 students in the evaluation sample. Gain scores for the comparison group will also be presented. Comparisons were made between the Chapter 1 evaluation sample and the comparison group by means of t-tests (two-tailed, significance level = .05). At a given grade level, the program was considered to have met the achievement score objective if the mean normal curve equivalent (NCE) gain score for the Chapter 1 group was not significantly different from or was significantly greater than the mean gain score for the comparison group. The MAT-6 mean NCE scores for first grade non-LEP students, along with the SABE mean NCE scores for the LEP students will also be presented.

Gain Scores: A gain score is the difference, in normal curve equivalents, between a score obtained by a student at the end of the 1987-88 school year and that student's score at the end of the 1988-89 school year. For a student below grade level, a positive gain score indicates movement toward or even beyond the mean of the normative group for the norm-referenced test. A gain score of zero means that a student maintained his or her level of academic achievement relative to the normative group.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Was there a difference between the Chapter 1 students and the non-Chapter 1 comparison group in reading/language arts at grade levels 2 through 5?

non-LEP Students
MAT-6 Reading NCE Scores

		Grade Level				
	MAT-6	2	3	4	5	Total N
Chapter 1 Group	Posttest	36.8	30.0	40.3	39.5	—
	Pretest	37.6	35.1	32.8	38.2	—
	Change	–0.8	–5.1	7.5	1.3	—
	N	693	531	635	610	2469
Comparison Group	Posttest	37.4	32.4	44.2	42.5	—
	Pretest	37.6	37.6	35.6	40.9	—
	Change	–0.2	–5.2	8.6	1.6	—
	N	922	1009	1537	1276	4744
	Difference	–0.6	0.1	–1.1	–0.3	—
	t - value	–1.01	0.19	–2.64*	–0.68	—

*p ≤ .05

non-LEP Students
MAT-6 Language NCE Scores

		Grade Level				
	MAT-6	2	3	4	5	Total N
Chapter 1 Group	Posttest	39.5	40.9	48.2	45.8	—
	Pretest	37.9	41.2	46.9	47.3	—
	Change	1.6	–0.3	1.3	–1.5	—
	N	693	531	635	610	2469
Comparison Group	Posttest	39.8	44.5	51.6	47.2	—
	Pretest	37.2	43.2	49.7	48.4	—
	Change	2.6	1.3	1.9	–1.2	—
	N	922	1009	1537	1276	4744
	Difference	–1.0	–1.6	–0.6	–0.3	—
	t - value	–1.44	–2.11*	–0.98	–0.51	—

*p ≤ .05

Trends

- The program objective was met at three of the four grade levels on the MAT-6 reading test, with the Chapter 1 students performing as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 3, and 5.
- The program objective was met at three of the four grade levels on the MAT-6 language test, with the Chapter 1 students performing as well as the comparison group at grades 2, 4, and 5.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What was the performance of the LEP students on the initial administration of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) at grade levels 1 through 5?

LEP Students
SABE NCE Scores

SABE		Grade Level 1	2	3	4	5	Total N
Reading	Mean	55.3	53.1	42.9	42.3	39.6	—
	N	213	222	44	33	7	519

Trends

- The Chapter 1 LEP students enrolled in the DLACL program scored above grade level on the SABE reading test at grades 1 and 2.
- The Chapter 1 LEP students enrolled in the DLACL program scored below grade level on the SABE reading test at grades 3, 4, and 5.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What was the performance of the first grade non-LEP students on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6)?

non-LEP First Grade
MAT-6 NCE Scores

	Subject	
MAT-6	Reading	Language
Mean	41.7	42.5
N	1084	1084

Trends

- The Chapter 1 non-LEP first grade students enrolled in the DLACL program scored below grade level on the MAT-6 reading and language subtests.